Closure of mini-steel plants

*155 SHRI KAMAL MORARKA: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) the number of mini steel plants lying closed at present; and the reasons for their closure;

(b) whether any proposal is under Government's consideration to allow the use of sponge iron for the manufacture of steel;

(c) whether there is a demand for the reduction in the basis duty on sponge iron; and

(d) if so, what is Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI MAKHAN LAL FOTEDAR): (a) As per information available to Government, 23 Electric Arc Furnace Units-are lying-closed at present, on account of (i) internal financial difficulties (ii) shortage of power and (iii) shortage of scrap.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Representations for reduction in customs duty on steel scrap including sponge iron have been received.

(d) Government has not taken any final decision in this regard.

पंजाब को सप्लाई किया गया पिग लौह एवं इस्पात

*156. **सरदार जगजीत सिंह अरोड़ा:**
श्री राम जेठमलानी:

क्या इस्पात और खान मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या यह सच है कि पंजाब में गत वर्ष 1988 में पिग लौह एवं इस्पात की आपूर्ति वहां के उद्योगों की आवश्यकतानुसार नहीं की गई;

(ख) यदि हां, तो गत दो वर्षों में 1987-88 एवं 1988-89 जनवरी तक पंजाब को पिग लौह एवं इस्पात की कितनी मात्रा की आपूर्ति की गई;

(ग) कम आपूर्ति किए जाने के क्या कारण थे; और

(घ) पंजाब में इन वस्तुओं की वार्षिक मांग कितनी-कितनी है?

इस्पात और खान मंत्री (श्री माखन लाल फोतेदार): (क) से (घ) पंजाब सहित राज्यों में उद्योग लोहा तथा इस्पात सीधे उत्पादकों और सीधे आयात की मार्फत से भी प्राप्त करते हैं। सरकार, लघु उद्योग निगमों की अनुमानित मांग के अलावा राज्यवार मांग के कोई आंकड़े एकत्र नहीं करती है, और न ही इन आंकड़ों को रखती है। तथापि, सरकार को इस बात की जानकारी है कि कच्चे लोहे और गर्म बेल्लित कलालय जैसी इस्पात की कुछ मदों की सप्लाई कम है।

Diversification of activities of the N.B.C.C.

*157. SHRI SHANTI TYAGI: Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the National Building Construction Corporation was not confining itself to the construction of buildings only but had diversified its activities and have plans to bid for turnkey projects in various parts of the country;

(b) if so, the details of these activities and plans and projects;

(c) whether the N.B.C.C. have undertaken works in foreign countries also; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI MOHSINA KIDWAI): (a) to (d) The N.B.C.C., a Public Sector Construction Corporation, has been engaged for about past 3 decades in civil construction activity in India and abroad.

The Company is continuing to operate in accordance with its original objective

as a premier construction company in the Public Sector.

The Company has been undertaking turnkey projects both in India and abroad. The Company has executed constructional projects abroad in Libya, Iraq, North Yeman and Nepal.

A Statement regarding the foreign projects undertaken by the N. B. C. C. and the list of turnkey projects on going and already completed is in Annexure. [*See* Appendix CXLIX, Annexure No. 61.]

Production of fertilizers

*158. SHRI MAHENDRA PRASAD:
SHRI MURLIDHAR CHANDRAKANT BHANDARE:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that production of nitrogen and phosphate fertilizers has registered a quantum jump this year (April to December, 1988) as compared to that during corresponding period last year and in some respects is expected to exceed the targets;

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard;

(c) what are the details of capacity utilisation figures during the said period; and

(d) to what extent the country falls short of self-sufficiency in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI BHAJAN LAL): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. There is a quantum jump in the production of nitrogenous and phosphatic fertilizers during the period April to December 1988 as compared to that in the corresponding period last year. Targets, production and capacity utilisation for the period April-Dec., 1988 & April-Dec., 1987 are given below:-

	April-Dec. 1988-89			April-Dec. 1987-88		
	Target (lakh MT)	Production (Lakh Mt)	Cap. Utilisation (%)	Target (lakh MT)	Production (Lakh MT)	Cap. Utilisation (%)
Nitrogen	47.17	49.14	84.1	40.55	38.95	75.0
Phosphate	16.53	18.52	96.1	15.10	11.26	69.4
TOTAL	63.70	67.66	85.4	55.65	50.21	72.6

(d) The supply of nitrogenous fertilizers in the country is comfortable but import of phosphatic and potassic fertilizers is being made as the country does not have significant sources of raw material for the manufacture of phosphatic fertilizers nor there is any source of potassic fertilizers (Muriate of Potash). However, the import of fertilizers has substantially declined from about 34 lakh tonnes of nutrients in 1985-86 to 23 lakh tonnes in 1986-87 and to about 10 lakh tonnes in 1987-88.